

19 February 1963

**MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable McGeorge Bundy
Special Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs**

In connection with the overflight program in September, I wish to be abundantly clear on two matters which are bound to be the subject of further congressional inquiry.

1. Low-level Flights

At my request General Carter on 30 August mentioned to the Special Group the need for additional flights over Cuba and at that time brought up the matter of 101's in low-level reconnaissance. At General Carter's request, on 1 and 2 September the Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance met to consider the kind of information that could be obtained through use of RF-101/F8U-type aircraft. As a result of these deliberations, General Carter on 10 September 1962 addressed a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense recommending that the Secretary initiate the necessary action to provide for the employment of tactical-type reconnaissance against Banes or other suitable targets. This was consistent with my desire to

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request low-level flights where ominous situations appeared from high-level photographic interpretation or from other sources, and the concern over the Banes installation was the first such instance.

This request was turned down by Secretary McNamara personally and since no high-level photography occurred which revealed situations demanding low-level photography, no further request was made.

2. September High-level Photography

At a meeting in your office on September the 10th, General Carter presented a CIA proposal for a single high-level flight penetrating Cuban territory over the Isle of Pines, proceeding in a counter-clockwise direction south of Las Villas and Camaguey Provinces, overflying Oriente Province west of Guantanamo, turning east of that Base to cover the suspect installation at Banes, then proceeding northwestward along the north coast of Cuba, and exiting just east of the SAM site complex to the west of Cayo Coco. The primary purpose of the mission was SAM search, and the primary target thereof was the Banes area where earlier photography had not been conclusive. The flight if approved would have provided vertical photography of approximately 7,100 square miles of Cuba. ^{11,700 (10mi) or 28,275mi² (35mi)}

At the direction of the Special Group, and at the insistence of Secretary Rusk, this plan was changed and four flights were ordered,

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two wholly peripheral and involving no land overflight, and producing such photography as is possible to obtain under such restrictions, and this was considered marginal; one overflight over the Isle of Pines, involving the coverage of approximately 1,400 square miles and one overflight across the Eastern end of Cuba targeted against Banes and involving approximately 2,700 square miles of coverage.

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1000 (10mi) 6000 mi² (35mi)

The first of these four flights was attempted on 17 September; however, the mission was negated because of heavy cloud cover. The first successful mission was flown on 26 September 1962, and this was the first day following 10 September on which the comprehensive flight proposed by CIA might have been flown.

Between 26 September and 4 October, when I raised the issue at the Special Group meeting, no consideration was given to additional overflights of Cuba because the program approved at the September 10th meeting had not been carried out--operations were continually postponed because of weather.

I set these facts down as I believe they will be developed by any penetrating inquiry such as that undertaken by the Killian Board. Therefore I believe that the statement proposed by Secretary McNamara last evening that six overflights over Cuba were authorized and performed between September 5th and October 14th was misleading and will create trouble.

John A. McCone
Director

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I. So. m. coverage - cosine cloud free

original proposal (

4 Htz - 1000 Zapeta

what in terms of targets

when could have flown.

when readout results.

Trying for mosaic

II. Sensitivity of overflying denied areas.

III. low-level

Gen. Carter has declass memos. (10 Sept).

IV. Dissemination problem.